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Blackburn Rural District Council.

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MEDICAL OFFICER'S

# REPORT

Year ending December 31st, 1925.

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BLACKBURN :

W. A. HULME, Boro' Press, 28, Mincing Lane.



“WOODVILLE,”  
PRESTON NEW ROAD,  
BLACKBURN,

MAY 17TH, 1926.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Blackburn  
Rural District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have much pleasure in presenting to you my Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1925, on the health and sanitary conditions of the fifteen townships comprising the Blackburn Rural Sanitary District.

The Report is in the form of a “Survey Report,” prepared on the lines as defined by the Ministry of Health, and includes the details necessary for the Ministry in addition to other matters of local interest in connection with the conditions prejudicial to the health of the District.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	19,916
Population—Census, 1921	...	...	...	10,128
Estimated, 1925	...	...	...	10,330

Physical features and general character of the area—The Ordnance Datum varies from 150 to 1,050 with a subsoil composed chiefly of clay.

Number of inhabited houses (Census, 1921)—2,310.

Rateable Value—£90,493.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£377/1/1.

The chief occupations of the inhabitants are Agriculture, Cotton Weaving and Paper Mills. There is no particular influence on public health in any of these occupations. Apart from Agriculture, many of the workers in the other industries reside outside the District, and of the residents in the District many are employed outside the District.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

					Total.	Males.	Females.	
Births—	Legitimate	...	...	125	...	67	...	58
„	Illegitimate	...	...	3	...	1	...	2
Deaths	...	...	...	130	...	71	...	59
Deaths of Infants under one year of age—								
Total—9.				Legitimate—9.		Illegitimate—None.		
Deaths from Measles (all ages)		...	...	...	...	...	...	None.
„ Whooping Cough (all ages)		...	...	...	...	...	...	None.
„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)		...	...	...	...	...	...	One.

# RATES PER 1,000 OF POPULATION.

				Birth-rate		Death-rate		Death-rate from Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	Rate of Deaths under 1 year to 1,000 births.	
Mean of 10 years—1915-24	...	...	...	15.9	...	12.8	...	0.63	...	75
1924...	...	...	...	14.5	...	11.7	...	0.38	...	73
1925...	...	...	...	12.3	...	12.5	...	0.58	...	70
Increase or decrease in 1925 on :—										
Ten years' average	...	...	...	—3.6	...	—0.3	...	—0.05	...	—5
Previous Year	...	...	...	—2.2	...	+ 0.8	...	+ 0.20	...	—3

For England and Wales during 1925 the birth-rate was 18.3 and the death-rate 12.2, the infantile death-rate being 75 per 1,000 births.

There have been no causes of sickness or invalidity which have been specially noteworthy in the area during the period under review, nor are there any conditions of occupation or environment which appear to have had a prejudicial effect on health.

## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

The populations of the respective Townships in the District are not sufficiently large for arrangements to be made by the Council for schemes usually provided for inhabitants in more densely populated areas. For smallpox, Hospital accommodation is provided at the Blackburn Corporation Smallpox Hospital, Finnington, one bed being available—for which a retaining fee is paid. For other Infectious Diseases arrangements exist for acceptance of cases, as required, in the Blackburn County Borough Fever Hospital, Chorley Joint Hospital and Withnell Fever Hospital. There is no Hospital accommodation in the District for Tuberculosis, Maternity Cases or for Children. No institutional provision is made for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children. For Maternity and Child Welfare, a centre is provided by the Lancashire County Council at Feniscowles, and this is open each Tuesday from 2 to 4 p.m. Day Nurseries, School Clinics, Tuberculosis Dispensaries or Venereal Diseases Treatment Centres are not provided in the District, but attention is drawn to the fact that under the County Council Scheme for diagnosis and treatment of Venereal Diseases, arrangements have been made at various Public Institutions in the County for the free treatment of persons suffering or suspected to be suffering, from Venereal Disease. Ambulance facilities for Infectious Cases include the removal of patients in an Infectious Hospital Motor Ambulance—usually that of the Hospital to which the respective cases are being admitted. For non-infectious and accident cases the Motor Ambulance of the Blackburn and East Lancashire Royal Infirmary is used.

The Medical Officer of Health for the District is Dr. W. R. Pollard, M.R.C.P.E., L.R.C.S.I., a part-time Officer—but who does not hold any other public appointments. The Sanitary Inspector is Mr. Herbert Eccleston (holder of Certificate of Royal Sanitary Institute, Meat Inspector's Certificate, Sanitary

Engineer's Certificate, etc.), a whole-time Officer. There are no other Public Health Officers, such as Health Visitors and Special Nurses.

There are no schemes for Professional Nursing in the Home, nor is there a District Nursing Association in the District, but there appears to be a personal interest in the welfare of those in unfortunate circumstances and there is evidence that assistance is readily given when necessary. No local scheme has been prepared in regard to the supply of food and milk for expectant and nursing mothers and of milk for infants. The number of midwives on the County Council Register at the 31st December, 1925, was 3, all of whom were actually practising.

There are no Local Acts or Special Local Orders in force except those conferring on the Council the powers of an Urban Authority under several sections of the Public Health Act, 1875. The General Adoptive Acts in force include the Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890 (operative from 6th April, 1903); part of the Public Health Act, 1890 (operative from 28th March, 1894); and part of the Public Health Act, 1907 (operative from September, 1924). The Bye-laws relating to Public Health include the Building Bye-laws (operative from July, 1891; Dairies, Cowshed and Milk Bye-laws (operative from January, 1900); Offensive Trades Bye-laws (operative from September, 1914); and Slaughter-house Bye-laws (operative from September, 1911). These Adoptive Acts and Bye-laws relating to Public Health are well maintained.

Co-operation with the Medical and ancillary services of the National Health Insurance is by cases of accident or severe sickness being accepted in the Blackburn and East Lancashire Royal Infirmary or the Queen's Park Hospital, Blackburn.

#### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER—Mellor Brook is supplied from the Manchester Corporation mains. Other parts of the District are supplied from Blackburn Corporation and Darwen Corporation mains and the remaining parts derive the supply from private reservoirs and wells. There is no liability to plumbo-solvent action nor does there appear to be any insufficiency of water. No extensions have been made during the year, nor has it been necessary to take action in respect of any form of contamination.

RIVERS AND STREAMS—It has not been necessary to take action with regard to the pollution of streams.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE—The various Sewage Disposal Works in the District have been under observation and have worked satisfactorily. The method of treatment is by open and closed septic tanks, bacteria beds, land filtration and single contact filters. The character of drainage is by separate system and a sewer has been extended at Billington. 17 drains have been tested during the year.



CLOSET ACCOMMODATION—The following information relates to the accommodation at the end of 1925—

Privy Middens—No. of Middens—59.

No. of Closets attached to these Middens— 59.

No. of Pail Closets—789.

No. of Fresh Water Closets—1,220.

No. of Movable Ashbins for refuse—900

No. of Waste Water Closets (approx.)—81.

Conversions—

				During year 1925.	During 5 years 1921-1925.	
No. of Privy Closets	{ To Fresh W.C's	...	...	—	...	—
	{ To Waste W.C's	...	...	—	...	—
	{ To Pails, etc.	...	...	4	...	6
No. of Pail Closets	{ To Fresh W.C's	...	...	230	...	243
	{ To Waste W.C's	...	...	—	...	—
No. of Waste W.C's to Fresh W.C's				—	...	—
No. of Houses at which Movable Ashbins have been substituted for fixed receptacles				40	...	90

The Council have adopted the Public Health Amendment Act, 1907 (Section 59), for the Parish of Livesey, relating to the abolition of privy middens and pail closets, and the Council are providing for the total cost. For new property, Fresh Water Closets are provided, where possible.

SCAVENGING —In the Townships of Mellor, Pleasington, Livesey, Ramsgreave, Wilpshire and Salesbury, scavenging is done by the Rural District Council, by contract, under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector. In the remainder of the District it is done by owners and occupiers of the houses. The refuse is disposed on the land, as there is no destructor. Privy Middens only exist in remote parts of the District and are emptied in the daytime.

SANITARY INSPECTION—127 informal notices were served on owners and occupiers in respect of dirty yards: absence of ashes receptacles; defective slop-pipes; defective rain-water pipes; defective yard surfaces; fouled closet basins; defective flushing apparatus; shippons to limewash; stopped up drains and unsuitable sanitary accommodation. The serving of a statutory notice in any of these cases was not necessary, as the nuisances were abated on intimation from the Sanitary Inspector.

Work done under this heading includes the following—

Visits and re-visits to houses—207.

Inspections of Farmsteads—721

Visits to Factories, Workshops and Workplaces—27

Visits to Travelling Vans used for human habitation—19


Visits to Bakehouses—16

Visits to Butchers' Shops—67

Visits to Houses *re* Infectious Diseases—163

Visits to Schools—24

Slaughter-house Inspections—81



Visits to Chip-potato Shops—	49
Visits to Fat and Hide Stores—	51
Visits to work in progress—	309
Smoke Observations—	14
Visits to Scavenging Contractors—	218
Visits to Refuse Tips—	149

SMOKE ABATEMENT—14 observations were taken and it has not been necessary to take proceedings to procure abatement.

PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYE-LAWS AND REGULATIONS—It has not been necessary to take any action in regard to houses let in lodgings, offensive trades, etc.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES—27 Inspections were made during the year—13 to Factories, 7 to Workshops and 7 to Workplaces—and their condition appeared to be fairly satisfactory. Unsuitable sanitary accommodation was found in one instance and this has been remedied. It has not been necessary to issue written notices or to take proceedings against occupiers of any of these premises.

The Sanitary Conditions of the Schools in the District are fairly good and those who are responsible for their maintenance are asked to keep a strict watch for anything which might be detrimental to the health of those who attend the Schools.

#### HOUSING.

The general housing conditions in the Area are fairly satisfactory. There does not appear to be any excess or shortage of houses in the District and houses are being built, as required, by private enterprise. A subsidy is granted for each house of the "working class" type erected in the District. There have been no important changes in population during the period under review, or anticipated in the near future. There is no indication of over-crowding and the general standard of housing in the area is satisfactory. No difficulties have been found in remedying unfitness, either under the Public Health Acts, or under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925. It has not been necessary to suggest or take special measures to secure improved management of property by owners; better care of property by tenants, or for the gradual carrying out of repairs according to agreed arrangements.

There are no unfit back-to-back houses in the District.

The conditions so far as they affect housing as regards water supply, closet accommodation, refuse disposal, and the relative measures taken during 1925, are quoted under "Sanitary Circumstances of the Area" in this report.

Building Bye-laws, in respect of new houses, are fully enforced under the supervision of the Surveyor and these bye-laws have recently been re-modelled and approved of by the Ministry of Health.

## HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR, 1925.

New Houses erected during the year—

(a) Total—including numbers given separately under (b) ...	47
(b) With State Assistance under the Housing Acts—	
(i) By the Local Authority ... ..	None
(ii) By other bodies or persons ... ..	47

No. of houses in course of erection under Council's Building Scheme.. None

Financial assistance for purposes of increasing housing accommodation—

Advances made during 1925 :—

By Loans—None. By Subsidy—31.

Amount of subsidies—£76/18/6 per house.

Unfit Dwelling-houses—

Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ..	22
No. of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... ..	22
No. of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ... ..	4

## INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY—The wholesomeness of the milk produced within, or brought into, the district is satisfactory and the present arrangements are quite adequate for the distribution of pure milk. The administration of the Milk and Dairies (Consolidation) Act, 1915, the Milk and Dairies (Amendment) Act, 1922, and the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Orders, is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector in a satisfactory manner. It has not been necessary to take any action with regard to Tuberculous Milk and Tuberculous Cattle. Only one Dealer's License (for "Certified" Milk) was issued during 1925 under the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923, and no refusals or revocations of registration of retailers, or of licenses for graded milk, have been made during the year.

The Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops in the District are systematically and periodically inspected and their condition is generally satisfactory. 721 Inspections have been made during the year. The Regulations made under the Order of the Local Government Board are enforced. The total number of Cowkeepers in the District is 350, of which 206 are on the Register.

MEAT—All animals slaughtered in the District are inspected and marked in accordance with the requirements of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, sanctioned by the Ministry of Health. Condemned meat is destroyed by burning at the Blackburn Corporation refuse destructor. 3-cwt. of tuberculous carcasses and parts, and 235-lbs. of diseased, unsound or unwholesome meat were con-



demned or surrendered during 1925 as unfit for human consumption. No legal proceedings have been taken in respect of these. Stalls, Shops, Stores and Vehicles are regularly inspected under the provisions of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924.

There is no public Slaughterhouse in the District and the following details are given regarding private Slaughterhouses :—

	In 1920	In Jan., 1925	In Dec., 1925
Number registered...	None	None	None
Number licensed ...	2	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total ...	2	1	1

OTHER FOODS—There are 4 Bakehouses in the District and the condition of these is very satisfactory.

#### PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

In reviewing the prevalence of notifiable diseases during the past five years, there are no noteworthy facts to record as to the source or spread of infection, as there have been no extensive outbreaks during that period.

Diphtheria anti-toxin is regularly used in cases of diphtheria and supplies are kept at various Police Stations throughout the District.

There have been no “return” cases of Scarlet Fever and, in regard to the diseases notifiable under the Regulations of the 7th January, 1919, no cases of Malaria, Dysentery and Trench Fever have been recorded. A few isolated cases of Pneumonia have occurred in the District and duly recorded.

Specimens for Pathological and Bacteriological Examinations are sent to Professor W. C. C. Topley, Public Health Laboratory, Manchester. The specimens examined in 1925 were :—Throat Swabs—3, Water—4, and Pus—1.

No use has been made of the tests known as the Schinck and Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever respectively, or of the recently developed artificial methods of immunization against these diseases.

Under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1917, no vaccinations (primary or re-vaccinations) have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health during the year.

The School Closure was adopted on three occasions (for Measles) during the year and all Reports, under Section 14 (4) Sanitary Officers’ Order, 1922, are made to the County Medical Officer in this connection.

DISINFECTION—21 houses were disinfected during 1925. The method of disinfection of clothing, etc., is by fumigation in the room by formaldehyde gas. Houses are disinfected after notification of Phthisis cases.

# Notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during 1925:—

	TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED													HOSPITAL		
	Total Cases under all ages	1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 & over	Total cases removed to Hpl.	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to District	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	11	...	...	...	...	4	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	9	...	...
Diphtheria, including Membranous Croup	4	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	1	...	...	...	3	...	...
Acute Primary Pneumonia	7	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	3	1	1	1	...	...	...
Acute Influenzal Pneumonia																
Ophthalmia	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Neonatorum	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	23	...	1	...	...	4	2	5	3	...	3	3	1	1	12	...

## TUBERCULOSIS.

### New Cases and Mortality during 1925:—

Age -Periods		NEW CASES					DEATHS				
		Pulmonary M.	Pulmonary F.	Non-Pulmonary M.	Non-Pulmonary F.		Pulmonary M.	Pulmonary F.	Non-Pulmonary M.	Non-Pulmonary F.	
Years	0-1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
"	1-5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
"	5-10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
"	10-15	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
"	15-20	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
"	20-25	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
"	25-35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
"	35-45	...	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
"	45-55	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
"	55-65	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
65 and upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	...	2	3	2	...	...	1	5	...	...	...

The notification of Tuberculosis by Medical Practitioners in the District is strictly observed and appears to be efficient. It has not been necessary to take any action on account of wilful neglect or refusal to obey the requirements. There is no evidence of excessive incidence of, or mortality from, Tuberculosis in any particular occupation in the District.

No action has been necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, and the Public Health Act, 1925, Section 62.

## GENERAL.

The District is composed of 15 Townships and covers a wide area. The chief industry is farming and as it is essential that the conditions, under which milk, etc., is produced, should be kept up to a good standard, a close watch has to be maintained for anything which may arise to prejudice the health of not only the inhabitants of this District, but also of those Districts in which the milk, etc., produced in this District, is consumed. Appeals have been made in

previous years for producers of milk to take the greatest possible interest in the cleanlinesses of their cattle, cowsheds and dairies, etc., and these appeals appear to have been responded to by a large number of those concerned. Although it is impossible to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the direct individual benefits of these improvements by the producers, there can be no doubt that the consumer is bound to be more healthy by the consumption of milk, etc., produced under conditions free from the many contaminations which are liable to arise if neglect is allowed. An appeal is now made for the consumer to take every precaution in the care and use of milk. If people could only be made to realise the many benefits which are to be gained by the exercise of ordinary care, the collective result of this would not only minimise sickness, but should assist in building up reserve vitality to meet those periods which tend to reduce health. Milk is the basis of food for young children and invalids, and it stands to reason that this should have every care, particularly when the consumer is in a delicate state of health. The care of milk is quite simple—clean utensils should be used ; milk purchased at different times should never be mixed ; keep a cover over the utensil when not in use and, if possible, store in a cool place.

I am pleased to report that the health of the District is very satisfactory, the inhabitants appear to be taking an active interest in matters regarding their health, and the general conditions throughout the District are well maintained.

I remain,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

W. R. POLLARD,

Medical Officer of Health.

